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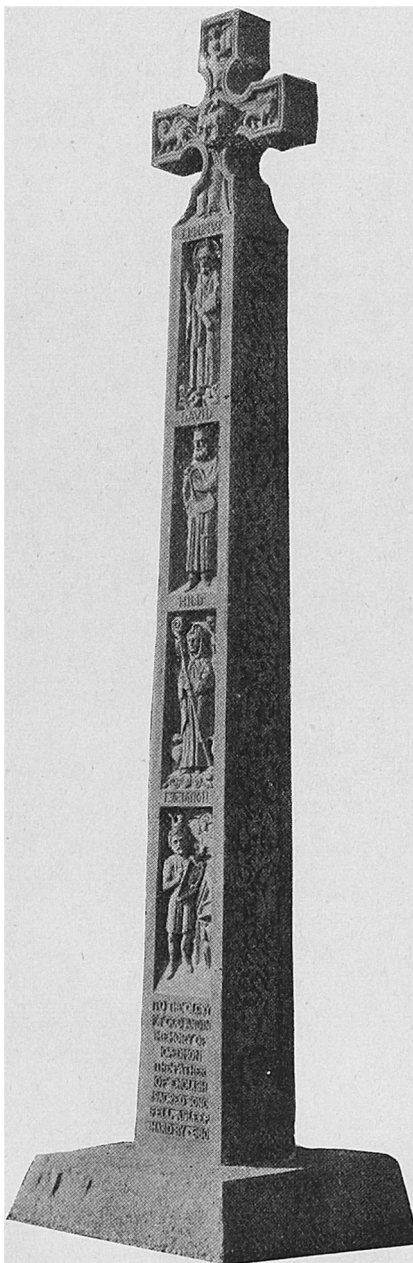
THE CÆDMON CROSS AT WHITBY.

THE town of Whitby is to be congratulated upon having, after the lapse of twelve centuries, paid a debt of honour to the memory of the first Christian poet of our land, Cædmon the bard. No child of the little seaside town, no tourist to St. Hild's broken shrine upon the cliff of "Streones-hald" will in future be able to forget that there lived and sang there "a poor cowherd of the House" who was raised up by God to give the Bible story in rhyming paraphrase to the wild people of Northumbria in the Golden Age of Anglian history, and who after having served his time fell asleep here, and was buried on the Abbey cliff in the very same year that Abbess Hild died, A.D. 680.

The movement to commemorate this Father of English sacred song was well taken up by the Anglo-Saxon scholars of our time both in England and America, and subscriptions from all the literary men and women who were asked to contribute were willingly given. Within the year—for the movement was not started till October of 1897—the cross was a *fait accompli*, and was unveiled by the Poet Laureate in the presence of a large company, on September 21st last.

The Committee were fortunate in obtaining the services of Mr. Charles Hodges of Hexham—an expert in Anglo-Saxon stones—to carry out the design, and the help of the Anglo-Saxon scholars of Oxford and Cambridge in translating into English the nine lines of the first poem Cædmon wrote, which

are preserved to us on the fly-leaf of the Moore Bæda at Cambridge, and in putting it back into Anglo-Saxon Runes for carving upon the borders of the cross shaft.



The cross stands up out of a solid base of stone to the height of 19 feet 6 inches, in the churchyard of St. Mary's, on the Abbey cliff, and is visible from all parts of Whitby, and is seen far out to sea, and from the moors miles away.

It is hewn out of the fine-grained, hard sandstone of the quarry the Romans worked, near Chollerford, upon the Roman Wall.

Without slavish copying, it embodies the proportions and general treatment of the famous Anglian crosses that were erected during Cædmon's life-time, viz., the Ruthwell, the Bewcastle, the Hexham and the Rothbury crosses.

Upon the East side facing the Abbey are carved four panels. I. The Christus in act of blessing—His feet upon a dragon and a swine. II. David playing a harp, (whose pattern is taken from the seventh century Lindisfarne Gospel). III. The Abbess Hild, her feet on the Ammonites, a Kittiwake gull beside her, and in the background five of her most famous scholars. IV. Cædmon in the stable, inspired to sing his first song. Beneath runs the inscription:

'To the glory of God, and

in memory of Cædmon, Father of English sacred song. Fell asleep hard by, A.D. 680.'

On the west side is carved a double vine, symbolical of Christ, and in the loops are

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found figures of the four great scholars trained at Whitby in Cædmon's time, under Abbess Hild, namely Bosa, Aetla, Oftgor, and John.

Beneath are inscribed the first nine lines of Cædmon's Hymn of the Creation, as preserved to us to-day.

The Runes of the same nine lines are also carved upon the border of one of the sides of the cross, as is the case at Ruthwell, and the same inscription appears in Saxon Minuscule on the border of the opposite side.

The two sides of the cross contain respectively a conventionalised English wild rose, with birds and animals, and an apple tree, emblematical of Eden, conventionalised also with other birds and animals.

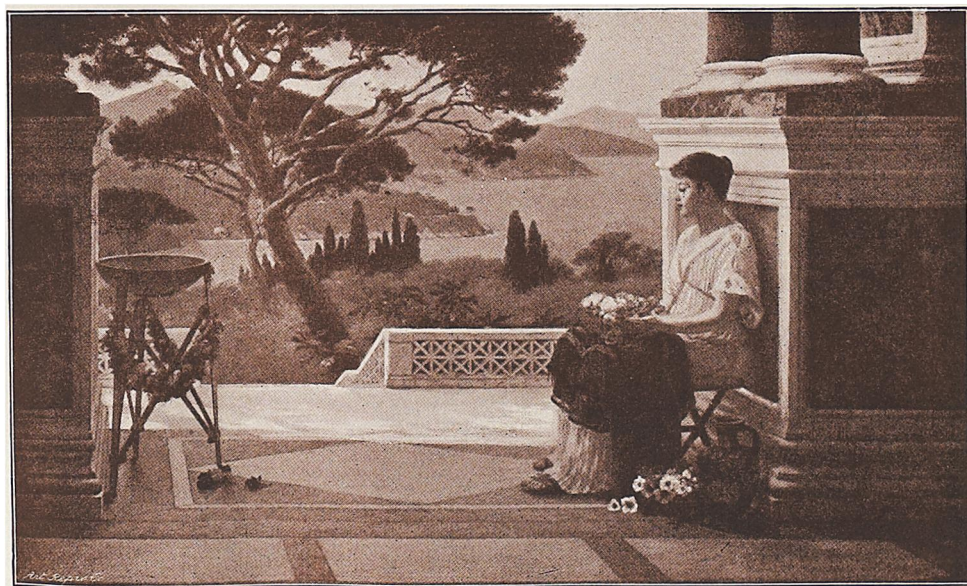
A harp is seen at the foot of the Tree of Life as emblematical of the harmony which Christ restored, and as suggestive of the immortality of

Christian song, and the wild roses, the badge of St. George, spring from an old Iona Cross, typifying that the life of the Christian Church ran on and bore fruit and flower at Whitby.

The head of the Cross contains the AGNUS DEI and the symbols of the four Evangelists on one side; on the other side, bosses and knot-work, and a dove as symbol of the Holy Ghost the Inspirer.

'It is,' said the Bishop of Bristol, 'the most beautiful cross of the kind in the North of England, and that means in the world.'

The above was most kindly communicated to us at the time by Canon H. D. Rawnsley, whose own part in the opening ceremony was naturally a leading one. Canon Rawnsley also sent us some charming verses from his pen, but unfortunately they have had to be sacrificed (most unwillingly on our part) to the old enemy 'crowded out.'—
ED.



FROM A PAINTING
BY G. VON HOESSLIN

(See 'Notes')